

### **Mentally prepare:**

How you think about social distancing, and distance learning, is crucial. These measures can make us feel powerless and out of control, which sometimes leads to anxiety, worry, and frustration. However, if we work to stay focused on the things we can control, we have the ability to get through these next few weeks successfully. Here are some tips to get started challenging any anxious thoughts:

- *Acknowledge what you are feeling.* Remind yourself that your emotions are valid and natural during challenging times like this.
- *Are you controlling what is in your hands?* Are taking safety and protective measures to keep yourself healthy? You cannot control what choices others make during this time, but you can control choices you make to remain healthy.
- *Remember, this will not last forever.* It may feel like things will never go back to normal, but they will. News stories, uncertainty, and continuing developments can make this seem impossible, but this time will come to an end and life will go back to normal.

### **Social Distance is not Social Isolation:**

- *Be intentional about connecting with others.* Make time at least every other day to call or FaceTime a friend or loved one. We are used to seeing each other whenever we want so it may feel weird right now to not be able to do that. Set up a time to talk with all your friends as a group or one-on-one. These connections are essential.
- *Talk about your experience with others.* It can be hard to share our feelings, but remember, you are not the only one going through this, we are all in this together and it will help to share. Camaraderie will help us all feel better.
- *Reach out to others.* Some of your peers may be struggling. Be intentional about reaching out to your peers and checking in on them! Helping others feel connected will also help you feel better.

### **Self-care is more important now than ever:**

- *Set a routine and schedule for your daily work and activities.* If you need help doing this ask your advisor, Dean, or Mrs. Garrett.
- *Stay active & get outside.* Get outside for a walk or run! The endorphins from the exercise and Vitamin D from the sun will lift your mood and help you feel better.
- *Talk about how you are feeling.* If you are struggling, know you are not the only one. Reach out and talk to others to help you process your emotions.
- *Eat regular and healthy meals.*
- *Be a helper.* Helping others can boost our well-being – ask your parents how you can help around the house or find a way to support the community around you!
- *Dig into your self-care go-to's.* Continue to meet with a therapist, do yoga, stay active, cook, practice mindfulness, create, read, play games, etc.

**A few final, specific thoughts about emotions you may be feeling right now.**

- *Disappointment.* You may be feeling disappointed right now that your Spring Break plans got cancelled, that events throughout the remainder of the year are uncertain, that you're not seeing your friends, that you don't get to do fun things you had planned....this is OKAY. I think we sometimes have the feeling that we cannot be disappointed because "it could be worse". Denying the disappointment you feel right now is not necessary. Acknowledge and value your feelings, in the end this makes us more empathetic towards others. It is okay to feel disappointed or angry right now. You do not have to squash or get rid of this feeling. Let yourself feel it for a bit and it will wane with time.

**Resources if you are struggling:**

- Remember, you are not alone. Here are some resources to explore if you are struggling.
  - o Reach out to Mrs. Garrett – lgarrett@altamontschool.org
  - o TalkSpace online therapy – [www.talkspace.com](http://www.talkspace.com)
  - o UTALK via The Crisis Center – (205)328 – 5465
  - o TEENLINE – call (310) 855- 4673, text TEEN to 849863, or visit their website at <https://teenonline.org>
  - o **In case of crisis or emergency:**
    - **Birmingham Crisis Center at (205) 323-7777**
    - **National Suicide Prevention Hotline at 1-800-273-8255**
    - **PIRC of Children's of Alabama at 205-638-7472**
    - **911**